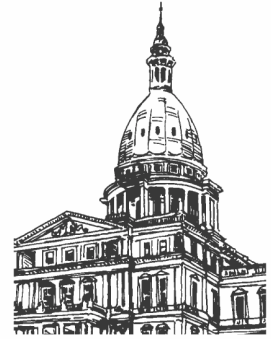


STATE SENATOR • MARTHA G. SCOTT • 2ND DISTRICT

# Scott Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 26, 2005

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## **CONTRACEPTIVE EQUITY HAS BIPARTISAN SUPPORT** *HAMMERSTROM AND SCOTT INTRODUCE TWO-BILL PACKAGE*

(LANSING) – Today, state Senators Beverly S. Hammerstrom and Martha G. Scott introduced a pair of bills that will require health insurance plans to include coverage for any prescribed drug or device approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use as a contraceptive.

Research shows that three-quarters of women ages 18-44 rely on private insurance to help them finance medical care, yet coverage of contraception by these insurers varies greatly. A decision in 2000 by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission stated that employers should cover the expenses of prescription contraceptives to the same extent, and on the same terms, that they cover the expenses of other drugs, devices, and preventive care.

“Ensuring access to affordable contraception improves the health of women, reduces the nation’s staggering rates of unintended pregnancy, and reduces the need for abortion,” said Sen. Hammerstrom. “With cost being one of the major barriers to access of contraceptives, women deserve to have equal coverage for health benefits that includes contraceptives.”

“Contraceptive coverage is a matter of simple fairness and common sense,” said Sen. Scott. “We cannot simply ignore the fact that woman of reproductive age are paying sixty-eight percent more in out-of-pockets costs for health care services than men of the same age.”

The U.S. has one of the highest rates of unintended pregnancy among western nations. Each year, nearly half of the six million pregnancies in this country are unintended, and more than half of all unintended pregnancies end in abortion.

Identical bills introduced by Senators Hammerstrom and Scott died at the end of the last two-year legislative session.

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